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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to provide background information on states that have implemented common and fully-transferable general education core curricula. Following a brief review of the literature, the results of a survey of selected states' Websites are summarized. The literature review includes a summary of major issues and contemporary practices associated with statewide articulation and transfer policies as well as a list compiled by Wellman (2002) of academic policies that affect transfer. This list includes: (1) admissions policies; (2) statewide core curriculum; (3) statewide catalogues; (4) transfer of credit policies; (5) common course numbering; (6) common academic calendars; and (7) support for voluntary agreements and cross-sector collaborations. To find out more about transfer policies in each state, the author conducted a search of Web-based resources and collected descriptive material from legislative Websites, state boards of higher education, state coordinating boards, and institutional Web sites. Following the presentation of brief state summaries, the author provides offers comments comparing states' interpretations of transferable general education cores. All thirteen states discussed in the report follow a "distribution model" core curricula, though they do appear to differ somewhat in the effectiveness of credit transfer. (Contains 11 references.) (RC)

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Statewide Transfer Policy: The Transferable General Education Core Curriculum

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For the Joint Boards Articulation Commission
Oregon University System

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Statewide Transfer Policy: The Transferable General Education Core Curriculum

by Jim Arnold for the Joint Boards Articulation Commission

Introduction and Purpose

A recent policy memo (Arnold, 2003) issued by the Joint Boards Articulation Commission asks the question: "Do we need to 'fix' the Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer (AA/OT) degree?" This question arises even though many consider Oregon's statewide block-transfer associate's degree to be quite successful, given its wide acceptance and popularity. Still, several perceived limitations have been articulated with regard to the actual implementation of the degree; of particular concern is the variability from campus-to-campus in the distribution requirements of the degree's general education core and the relatively low number of community college AA/OT degree completers.

Several possible "solutions" to this dilemma have been discussed (Arnold, 2003). Among them are a mandate to the community colleges to implement a uniform AA/OT degree; an appeals process for AA/OT-seeking students who transfer from community college to community college and experience loss of credits in doing so; and/or a statewide, standardized, lower-division general education core curriculum that is fully transferable between community colleges and accepted by Oregon University System institutions in lieu of their own general education requirements.

The purpose of this report is to provide background information on the practices in some other states that have implemented (either as a matter of law or other public policy) common and fully-transferable general education core curricula. Following a brief review of the literature to provide background information on this topic, the results of a survey of selected states' websites are summarized. Finally, conclusions regarding this information are offered.

Literature

In order to provide some context for the review of general education practices, the academic literature on the topics of (1) state-level articulation policies and (2) transferable general education core curricula was surveyed. The summary offered in this section is far from exhaustive, however. A few recent reports, referenced below, speaking to transferable general education core curricula, are included. One article offers some suggestions regarding good practice in developing robust state-level policies in transfer and articulation (Ignash & Townsend, 2001), and, then, another outlines specific state policies influencing community college to baccalaureate transfer (Wellman, 2002).

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Principles of Good Practice for State-Level Articulation Agreements

Ignash and Townsend (2001) recently reported on major issues and contemporary practices associated with statewide articulation and transfer policies. In 1999 the authors conducted an E-mail survey of all fifty states, seeking information about state-level efforts with respect to articulation and transfer. As part of their efforts in analyzing the "strength" of the policies that they found and reported on, the authors proposed a set of core principles upon which to base their evaluative efforts. The principles suggested, in brief, are (Ignash & Townsend, 2001):

> (1) Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions [should be] equal partners in providing the first two years of baccalaureate degree programs. (p. 176)
>
> (2) Transfer students should be treated comparably to "native" students by the receiving institution. (p. 177)
>
> (3) Faculty from both two-year and four-year institutions [should] have primary responsibility for developing and maintaining statewide articulation agreements. (p. 178)
>
> (4) Statewide articulation agreements should accommodate those students who complete a significant block of coursework (such as the general education requirements) but who transfer before completing the associate's degree. (p. 178)
>
> (5) Articulation agreements should be developed for specific program majors. (p. 179)
>
> (6) A state's private institutions should be included in statewide articulation agreements. (p. 179)
>
> (7) A statewide evaluation system should monitor the progress and completion of transfer students. (p. 179)

Of particular interest, and to the point of this report, is principle (4) above. The authors cite the work of Palmer, Ludwig, and Stapleton (1994) who discovered, in a study of 13 states, that just 37 percent of students who transferred completed their associate's degree prior to matriculating to a four-year campus. This compares to an Oregon study, from 1995-96 to 2000-01, which estimated that an average of just 30 percent of entering Oregon community college transfers to the Oregon University System had earned the Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer degree (Arnold, 2003). Given, then, that the vast majority of students who engage in the transfer process do so before earning their two-year credential, Ignash and Townsend suggested that statewide agreements acknowledge actual student behavior by establishing a transferable block of coursework that could be completed prior to an associate's degree.

Statewide Policies and Transfer

A recent report (Wellman, 2002) issued by The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and The Institute for Higher Education Policy examined policies in six specific states that addressed community college to baccalaureate transfer. The states that were featured were Arkansas, Florida, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and Texas, and were selected, at least in part, for their grades on retention and degree completion as reported in *Measuring Up 2000* (National Center, 2000). For these measures, three "high-performing" states (Florida, New York, North Carolina) were included in the analysis; the other three received lower grades. Although the report looked at how each state utilized several policy areas to impact transfer performance (including governance, enrollment planning, data collection, accountability), the elements of the report most relevant here are taken from the "lessons learned" (p. 37-39) section. While Wellman discusses various "structural policies" (that "determine preconditions of student transfer activities", p. 38), of most interest are the "academic policies" ("designed to influence the internal business of alignment between students, programs, and courses within and across institutions", p. 38). Each of the following policies included in the list below has been has been put into place in at least one of the six states studied, and all were identified as having been implemented in order to positively influence community college to baccalaureate transfer.

Academic Policies That Affect Transfer (Wellman, 2002)

(1) Admissions policies for four-year institutions; dual admissions or transfer guarantees; testing and remediation policies. (p. 38)

(2) Statewide core curriculum (mandatory or voluntary); articulation agreements (mandatory or individually negotiated). (p. 39)

(3) Statewide catalogues; student "course audit" capability. (p. 39)

(4) Transfer of credit policies: general; core curriculum; policies oriented to associate degree; "guarantees." (p. 39)

(5) Common course numbering. (p. 39)

(6) Common academic calendars. (p. 39)

(7) Support for voluntary agreements and cross-sector collaborations. (p. 39)

Of particular interest are items (2) and (4), speaking to transfer credit policies that address a core curriculum. All six states included in this study had statewide transferable general education core curricula as part of a comprehensive state policy to influence transfer and articulation.

Recommendations Regarding a Common General Education Core

The reports cited above (Ignash & Townsend, 2001; Wellman, 2002) both offer recommendations for improving state-level transfer in terms of a transferable general education core. The recommendations specifically addressing this area are:

> *Forge articulation and credit transfer agreements. Students in community colleges should not have to negotiate transfer credit agreements on an individual basis with receiving institutions. States that have not already done so should work to ensure that there are common agreements between public two- and four-year colleges about the transfer core curriculum.* (Wellman, 2002, p. 47)

> *[Because] tying transfer to completion of the associate's degree ... may be unrealistic, given that many community college students transfer to another institution ... before they complete the A.A. degree (Cohen & Brawer, 1996) ... [s]tatewide articulation agreements [should] facilitate student transfer with an agreed-upon general education core and at other appropriate points before completion of the associate's degree.* (Ignash & Townsend, 2001, p. 189)

There are many states for which these recommendations regarding a common general education core are familiar. In their study of statewide transfer policies, Ignash and Townsend (2001) found that 24 states had developed a common general education core, with most of these cores following a "distribution model." The states reporting a common general education core were:

> Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Utah, Washington, and West Virginia. (Ignash & Townsend, 2001, p. 184)

Further, as mentioned above, the states of Arkansas, Florida, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and Texas were reported to have statewide transferable general education core curricula as part of a comprehensive state policy to influence transfer and articulation (Wellman, 2002).

Evaluations of Common General Education Core Curricula

As more and more states have continued to implement standardized, transferable, lower-division general education core curricula, questions regarding the nature, scope and success of program implementation naturally arise. What has been the experience in these states with such programs? How successful are they?

No studies in the academic literature were found that address these questions. And the information available in policy reports and evaluation documents appears to be quite limited. However, the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) reports annually to the

State of Illinois Board of Higher Education on that status of that project, which includes the IAI General Education Core Curriculum (GECC).

The most recent report (State of Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2002) regarding the IAI was delivered to the Illinois Board on August 20, 2002. One section of that report is entitled "Evaluating IAI and Student Transfer: Multiple Measures of Effectiveness" (p. 66). The report advises the reader that the IAI was formally implemented in the summer of 1998 and that community college transfer students served by the Initiative are only now starting to appear on university campuses in large numbers. Further, the observation is made that without a statewide student record system, it is impossible to precisely track student behavior across all sectors, two year, four year, public, and private.

However, recognition for the need of statewide evaluation efforts has not been neglected.

> The University of Illinois at Chicago, in cooperation with eight two-year and four-year institutions, was awarded a Higher Education Cooperation Agreement (HECA) grant to undertake a longitudinal study of the effectiveness of IAI. An experimental design was set up to compare the length of time-to-degree required by "native" students and community college transfer students, and pre- and post-IAI transfer behavior. Each year, transcripts of 400 students from these eight institutions will be studied to see whether completing the IAI makes transfer easier and more efficient. In addition, the evaluation team will undertake extensive in-depth interviews with students about their transfer experience.
>
> Preliminary observations of interest included:
> - The establishment of the GECC had no significant effect on enrollment patterns (attempted hours, hours completed or passed, or hours passed in specific disciplines).
> - Freshmen at two-year institutions enrolled in more general education courses than freshmen at four-year institutions (as expected). These courses taken by students at two-year institutions were more often pre-requisites for major courses. Further study may clarify whether this more conscious course-taking behavior reduces time to degree.
> - There was no significant difference in cumulative GPA or in total hours earned between native and transfer students. (State of Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2002, p. 69)

Some campus-based evaluation efforts have been initiated as well. For example, Illinois State University (ISU) was among various individual institutions in Illinois that conducted some analysis of the transfer activity in light of IAI and the GECC. The ISU study found (State of Illinois Board of Higher Education, 2002, p. 68) that:

> Students completing the GECC are still in the pipeline. Very few transfer students who were awarded the baccalaureate degree between December 1999 and December 2001 report completing the GECC—only four percent (N=192) of a total of 4,761 graduates. It may be several years before large enough numbers of IAI

completers go through the system to provide meaningful data on IAI-GECC effectiveness.

There are several states that implemented statewide general education cores earlier in the decade of the 1990s than did Illinois; these states with more mature programs may have evaluation data that are more meaningful. Efforts are underway to procure data and analysis from these states.

Methods and Sources

As indicated earlier, the primary purpose of this report is to provide background information on the practices in some other states that have implemented transferable general education core curricula. Two studies previously reported (Ignash & Townsend, 2001; Wellman, 2002) guided the selection of state policies to examine for these purposes. Hence, the six states (Arkansas, Florida, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and Texas) examined in the report by The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and The Institute for Higher Education Policy (Wellman, 2002) were included, as were a selection of other states that have common general education cores, as reported by Ignash and Townsend (2001). The additional states were Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, and Montana. Hence, policies from a total of 13 states were examined.

To find out more about the transfer policies in each state, specifically as those policies speak to a transferable general education core, a search of web-based resources was performed with the Google search engine. In addition to the name of each state, a variety of other search terms were used, most often variants of "transfer -and- general -and- education-." Search results yielded descriptive material from legislative websites, state boards of higher education, state coordinating boards, state system offices, and individual institutional web sites. Material from these searches was printed out and sorted according to state; some of the search results were copied and pasted directly into a word-processing document in order to provide the summary of state policies found in the Appendix.

Findings

Detailed information about each state policy regarding a transferable general education core, copied directly from original (web site) resources, appears in the Appendix. This section, organized alphabetically by state, provides a very brief summary of each state's general education transfer policy. Following these summaries, some comments comparing states' interpretations of transferable general education cores are offered.

State-by-State Summary

Arkansas. A 1989 state law established the "State Minimum Core" of 35 semester credits and specifies the curriculum be applied toward the general education requirements for a baccalaureate degree at any state institution, and is "fully transferable between state institutions."

Arizona. The community colleges and public universities in Arizona structured an agreement in 1991 that allows student to "build a general education curriculum that is transferable upon completion without loss of credit to another public community college or university." The agreement is called the "Arizona General Education Curriculum" (AGEC), and has three forms, the AGEC-A, AGEC-B, and AGEC-S for students in liberal arts, business, or the sciences, respectively. Each form of the AGEC is comprised of 35 semester credits, and the different forms vary in the science and math courses acceptable for each version.

California. The "Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum" (IGETC) is a statewide policy developed in 1991 to "simplify transfer for community college students" in California. The IGETC is a comprehensive pattern of courses that community college students may complete to satisfy general education requirements at campuses of both the University of California (UC) and California State Systems. The IGETC is 34-39 semester credits, depending on transfer destination: UC and Cal State campuses have slightly different requirements.

Colorado. The "Guaranteed General Education Curriculum" in Colorado is the result of a 2001 law, and calls for the completion of 35-37 semester credits. This policy states "that students who successfully complete a state-guaranteed general education course will receive transfer credits applied to graduation requirements at all major public institutions."

Florida. The "Florida General Education Core Curriculum" originates in state law that calls for a general education core of at least 36 semester hours at each public community college and state university. Once a student has completed the core curriculum at any public institution and has that completion point noted on their transcript, no other state university or community college may require further general education courses.

Georgia. The "Core Curriculum" in Georgia originates in policy developed in 1996. The core curriculum developed by each institution is to be based on a common set of principles and a framework that ensures the core curriculum completed at one Georgia System institution is fully transferable to another System institution (for students transferring within the same major). Each institution's core consists of 60 semester hours, and includes 22-23 credits of "institutional options" (4-5 credits) and "courses related to the program of study" (18 credits in the major field).

Idaho. Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) policy specifies "SBOE Core Requirements" of 36 semester hours. Further, any transfer student (in-state or out-of-state) who has completed the equivalent of the SBOE's Core is not required to

complete additional lower division general education core courses. Such students must have certification of successful completion of their general education core, however. This certification is the "responsibility of the transferring institution."

Illinois. The Illinois "General Education Core Curriculum" (GECC) is the "phase 1" component of the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), a statewide policy adopted in 1998. The GECC is a 37-41 semester credit transferable core, that is intended to transfer to all Illinois institutions in lieu of the college or university's own campus-wide general education curriculum.

Montana. The "Montana Transferable Core Curriculum" is the result of an agreement entered into by 15 public colleges and universities in 1992. Satisfactory completion of this 30 semester hour curriculum permits students "to receive credit equivalent to the lower-division degree requirements of the receiving college or university."

New Mexico. The New Mexico "Lower-Division General Education Common Core Curriculum" is the result of 1995 legislation. This core is a 35 semester hour curriculum and "is the base around which most degree programs are built, and the courses in the core are guaranteed to transfer between all New Mexico campuses and to apply toward the graduation requirements for most degree programs."

New York. The mandatory core curriculum in New York came about as a result of action by the Trustees for the State University of New York (SUNY) in 1998. "The SUNY general education requirement applies to all state-operated institutions offering undergraduate degrees. It requires bachelor's degree candidates, as a condition of graduation, to complete a general education program of no fewer than 30 credit hours specifically designed to achieve the student learning outcomes in ten knowledge and skill areas and two competencies."

It may be argued that the SUNY core curriculum is not a true statewide transferable general education core. "Within CUNY [City University of New York] and SUNY there are separate core curriculum requirements for the associate degree. Articulation agreements must be individually negotiated between the campuses ... [and] within both systems, policies on the transfer of credits require that community college students who complete the transfer core curriculum will have their units accepted for degree credit at either a SUNY or CUNY campus, depending on where the community college is located." (Wellman, 2002, p. 29)

North Carolina. The North Carolina "General Education Transfer Core" is the result of 1995 legislation. "Upon admission to another public two-year institution or to a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina, students who have completed the [44 semester hour] general education core with the proper distribution of hours, but who have not completed the associate degree, will be considered to have fulfilled the institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements of the receiving institution."

Texas. The Texas "Core Curriculum" is the result of 1987 and 1997 Texas laws (mandating a statewide core) that were ultimately implemented in 1999 under the

direction of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as a transferable core curriculum. Hence, "every public institution of higher education is required by law to adopt ... a core curriculum of no less than 42 semester hours that will be fully transferable and, if completed, will substitute for a receiving institution's core curriculum."

Comparing States' Interpretations of General Education Transfer

There are a variety of interpretations of what constitutes a "transferable general education core curriculum." Despite the variations in interpretations, though, one *consistent* characteristic of general education core curricula, at least among the states represented in this report, is that they all follow a "distribution model" whereby students must complete certain numbers of credits in specified areas in the arts, sciences, and humanities. This observation is consistent with the findings of the 1999 multi-state survey conducted by Ignash and Townsend (2001).

Upon closer examination, there are also apparent *differences* between the curricula. Using the language used to describe these programs as the sole guide, it is possible to characterize the core curricula summarized earlier on a continuum from "weak" to "strong" in terms of transferability. "Weak" general education curricula would be those where courses may be at risk for denial of credit, where courses other than those of the typical general education curriculum are required, and/or where additional lower-division general education courses may still be required at the receiving institution. "Strong" general education curricula, alternatively, would be those that transfer intact, are not at risk of being "unpacked" (having courses examined individually), and automatically, without question, fulfill the lower-division general education requirements at the receiving institution. An example of a "weak" general education core would be New Mexico's that states "courses in the core are guaranteed to transfer between all New Mexico campuses and to apply toward the graduation requirements for most degree programs." Note the more definitive language used by Florida which states that "once a student has completed the core curriculum at any public institution and has that completion point noted on their transcript, no other state university or community college may require further general education courses."

"Weak" general education curricula are those described by the states of Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Montana, New Mexico, New York, and Texas.

"Strong" general education curricula are those described by Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, and North Carolina.

Of course, the line dividing "weak" and "strong" general education curricula is a subjectively-defined one, and the reader is encouraged to examine the abbreviated summaries above, as well as the expanded descriptions in the Appendix, to make their own assessment of the curricula.

Summary and Conclusions

According to a survey conducted in 1999, twenty-four states now have in place a common general education core curriculum (Ignash & Townsend, 2001). A more recent report on statewide transfer policy (Wellman, 2002) lists an additional four states, not mentioned in the 1999 survey, that have statewide core curricula. Hence, it appears that a majority of states have now moved in the direction of establishing some form of general education core curriculum that is (or purports to be) fully transferable between community colleges and the public baccalaureate-granting institutions.

This report has provided a summary of the general education core curricula in thirteen of these states. All of these curricula follow a "distribution model" (Ignash & Townsend, 2001), though they do appear to differ somewhat in the effectiveness of credit transfer. Some states describe these transferable curricula as coming with strong guarantees regarding acceptance of credit - along with the promise that no additional lower-division general education requirements will be required. Other states offer descriptions that seem somewhat more conditional or equivocal in terms of guaranteed credit transferability.

In Oregon, one state that does not offer a guaranteed statewide general education core, it may be that the time has come to seriously consider this approach as a "fix" for the real and/or perceived limitations of the Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer degree. The argument may be made that by establishing a transferable general education core, the mandate of 1987's HB 2913 may be more fully realized. That law (ORS 348.470) called upon the community colleges and the universities "to develop a set of general requirements for transfer students seeking admission to [Oregon University System] institutions that can provide a high quality curriculum."

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Appendix

This appendix provides, for selected states, expanded (compared to the abbreviated summaries offered in the body of the report) state-by-state summaries of general education core requirements as mandated by law or other statewide policy. For the most part, these descriptions were copied directly from materials available at web sites or from other readily-available publications. The web sites utilized were those of state legislatures, higher education governing or coordinating boards, state system offices, and in some cases, individual institutional web sites that had language describing state law or policy. The web site addresses used as sources for these excerpts are listed in the section for each state.

Note: Some phrases, sentences, or paragraphs appear in **bold** type for emphasis.

Arkansas

Act 98 of 1989 (Arkansas Code 6-61-218) provides that the State Board of Higher Education **"shall establish in consultation with the colleges and universities a minimum core of courses which shall apply toward the general education core curriculum requirements for baccalaureate degrees at state supported institutions of higher education and which shall be fully transferable between state institutions."** The term "State Minimum Core" will be used to describe the core.
(http://www.pccua.edu/advisor/BState_core.htm)

"Individual institutions may vary the specific course titles in the curriculum, and may require additional course work or specific grades to transfer. Students who complete the core courses at a two-year college know that the credits will be accepted and counted toward the general education requirements at the receiving four-year institution, and students who earn an associate degree know that all units will be accepted and that they will be admitted with upper-division standing." (Wellman, 2000, p. 21)

Arkansas State Minimum Core (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
6	0-3	3	8	9-12	6-9	35

Arizona

With the statement of values as common ground, the Arizona public community colleges and universities have agreed upon a common structure for a transfer general education curriculum. **This curriculum provides students attending any**

Arizona public community college with the opportunity to build a general education curriculum that is transferable upon completion without loss of credit to another Arizona public community college or university. This common agreement is called the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC).
(http://az.transfer.org/cas/atass/student/agecover.html)

The AGEC has three forms - the AGEC-A, AGEC-B and AGEC-S. The mathematics and science requirements provide the differentiation among the three variants of the core curriculum.

The **AGEC-A** is a 35 semester-credit lower division general education curriculum block that fulfills the lower division general education requirements of liberal arts majors (e.g., social science, fine arts, humanities). The block will transfer without loss of credit from any Arizona public community college to any other Arizona public community college or university, and is for students who intend to transfer into liberal arts majors.

Arizona AGEC-A (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Other	Total
6		3	8	6-9	6-9	0-6	35

Note: The mathematics requirement for the AGEC-A calls for college-level algebra or above. Courses in the "other" area are designated as ""options" and are to be chosen from the areas of "intensive writing and critical inquiry" and "awareness areas."

The **AGEC-B** is a 35 semester-credit lower division general education curriculum block that fulfills the lower division general education requirements of business majors. The block will transfer without loss of credit from any Arizona public community college to any other Arizona public community college or university, and is for students who intend to transfer into business majors.

Arizona AGEC-B (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Other	Total
6		3	8	6-9	6-9	0-6	35

Note: The mathematics requirement for the AGEC-A calls for brief calculus or above. Courses in the "other" area are designated as ""options" and are to be chosen from the areas of "intensive writing and critical inquiry" and "awareness areas."

The **AGEC-S** is a 35 semester-credit lower division general education curriculum block that fulfills the lower division general education requirements of majors with more stringent mathematics and mathematics-based science requirements The block will transfer without loss of credit from any Arizona public community college to any other Arizona public community college or university, and is for students who intend

to transfer into majors with more stringent mathematics and mathematics-based science requirements.

Arizona AGEC-S (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Other	Total
6		3+	8	6-9	6-9	0-6	35

Note: The mathematics requirement for the AGEC-A calls for calculus or above, taken for three or more credits. The science requirement calls for university chemistry or physics, appropriate to the major field. Courses in the "other" area are designated as "options" and are to be chosen from the areas of "intensive writing and critical inquiry" and "awareness areas."

California

The Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) is a comprehensive pattern of courses prospective transfer students from the California Community Colleges may complete to satisfy lower-division General Education requirements at both the University of California and the California State University. The IGETC was developed in 1991 to simplify transfer for California Community College students.

Students have the option of completing the IGETC, **or** the specific lower-division General Education-Breadth requirements of the school or campus they plan to attend. The IGETC must be **fully completed** prior to transfer. The IGETC is not an admission requirement, and completion of IGETC does not guarantee admission to the campus or program of choice. The IGETC will be most helpful to students who wish to keep their options open—those who know they want to transfer but have not decided upon a particular institution, campus, or major.

Certain students, however, are not well served by following the IGETC. Students who intend to transfer into high-unit majors, or those majors that require extensive lower-division preparation such as Engineering, should concentrate on completing the prerequisites for the major that a particular college may use to select a student for admission.
(www.curriculum.cc.ca.us/Curriculum/Transfer/Downloads/NewArticulationHandbook_Ch4.pdf)

California Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Lang	Total
6	3 (CSU)	3	7-9	9	9	Prof (UC)	34-39

Note: The CSU System requires one course in Oral Communication, which is not needed for the UC System. The UC System requires proficiency equivalent to two years of high school in the same second language, or other demonstrated proficiency, which is not needed for the CSU System.

Colorado

Colorado's state guaranteed general education courses are designed to allow students to begin their general education courses at one Colorado public higher education institution and later transfer to another without loss of general education credits. Colorado policy ensures that students who successfully complete a state guaranteed general education course will receive transfer credits applied to graduation requirements in all majors at all public institutions unless a specific statewide articulation agreement exists.

The state's guaranteed general education curriculum is organized into five categories: communication, mathematics, fine arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and physical and life sciences. To complete the Colorado state guaranteed general education core, students are required to take 11 courses or 35 to 37 semester credit hours and earn a C grade or better in each course. The guarantee is limited to the number of semester credit hours in each general education category.

When evaluating a transfer student's transcript, each Colorado public higher education institution will apply state guaranteed general education credits to its general education graduation requirements. Institutions may require additional general education graduation requirements beyond the 35 semester credit hours of state guaranteed general education credits. If an institution requires less than 35 general education credits, the institution will accept in transfer the full 35 credits and apply these credits toward a student's graduation requirements.

Colorado Guaranteed General Education Curriculum (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
6		3-5	8	9	6	35-37

***Note:** All state guarantee general education courses in communication, mathematics, arts and humanities, social and behavior science, and physical and life science shall be identified by a state-assigned common number.*

Florida

Florida Administrative Code: 6A-10.024 Articulation Between Universities, Community Colleges, and School Districts. (http://fac.dos.state.fl.us/)
(3) General Education
(a) Each state university and community college shall establish a general education core curriculum, which shall require at least thirty-six (36) semester hours of college credit in the liberal arts and sciences for students working toward a baccalaureate.
(b) **After a state university or community college has published its general education core curriculum, the integrity of that curriculum shall be recognized by the other public universities and community colleges. Once a student has been certified by such an institution on the official transcript as having completed satisfactorily its prescribed general education core curriculum, regardless of whether the associate degree is conferred, no other state university or community college to which he or she may transfer shall require any further such general education courses.**

The state of Florida has given students certain rights and responsibilities. The following is a brief outline of the [General Education Core]:

Each state university and community college must require at least 36 semester hours in the liberal arts and sciences; these hours are collectively termed the "general education core curriculum." Once students have been certified by the community college on an official transcript as having satisfactorily completed the prescribed core curriculum, with or without the completed associate in arts (A.A.) degree, no other state institution to which they may transfer can require further general education core curriculum. If they do not complete the general education core curriculum before transferring, the General Education Requirements must be satisfied according to the requirements of the new institution.
(http://www.fccj.org/catalog/2000_2001/SSRA/universitytransfer.html)

Florida General Education Core Curriculum (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
3		6	9	9	9	36

Note: In "Mathematical Sciences," students must take at least three hours of approved mathematics courses; the other three credits can be from approved courses such as statistics and computer science courses outside the math department. (http://www.reg.ufl.edu/01-02-catalog/academic_advising/academic_advising_006_.htm#A0001943)

Georgia

The principles and curricular framework were developed by the Administrative Committee on Undergraduate Education (Undergraduate Council), the Executive Committee of the Administrative Committee on Academic Affairs, and Academic Affairs staff and revised based upon suggestions from the institutions. The principles and framework were developed with the goal of allowing institutions some flexibility in defining learning outcomes while ensuring that the core curriculum completed at one System institution is fully transferable to another System institution. (http://www.usg.edu/admin/acadaff/handbook/section2/2.04/2.04.phtml)

POLICY 303.01 CORE CURRICULUM. **Each institution's core curriculum shall follow a common set of principles and framework. The System principles and framework were developed with the goal of allowing institutions some flexibility in defining learning outcomes while ensuring that the core curriculum completed at one System institution is fully transferable to another System institution.**

The specific courses contained in areas A through E of an institution's core curriculum are approved by the Council on General Education.

Students completing an area of the core curriculum will receive full credit for that area upon transfer to another System institution within the same major. In area A, students will receive credit for courses taken regardless of whether the area is completed. For students completing the core curriculum, the total number of hours required of transfer students for the baccalaureate degree shall not exceed the number of hours required of native students for the same major field.

Each institution's core curriculum shall consist of 60 semester hours as follows:

Georgia University System Core Curriculum (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Other	Total
6		3	10-11	12	6	22-23	60

Note: The "Other" category includes 4-5 semester hours of "institutional options," which are courses that address institution-wide general education outcomes of the institution's choosing PLUS "courses related to the program of study," which are lower-division courses related to the discipline of the student's major field.

Additional Note: Area A is Essential Skills (composition and mathematics). Area B is Institutional Options. Area C is Humanities/Fine Arts. Area D is Science, Mathematics, and Technology. Area E is social sciences. Area F is "courses related to the program of study."

Idaho

Students who complete requirements for the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree at an accredited institution in Idaho and Treasure Valley Community College will be considered as satisfying the lower division general education core requirements and shall be granted junior standing upon transfer to a four-year public institution in Idaho and will not be required to complete any additional lower division general education core courses subject to the conditions listed below.

Transfer students from any in-state or out-of-state academic accredited institution who have completed the equivalent of the State Board of Education's general education core for the Associate Degree will not be required to complete additional lower division general education core courses. However, these students must obtain certification of such completion. Certification of successful completion of the lower division general education core for students who have not completed the Associate of Science or Associate of Arts degree is the responsibility of the transferring institution.

This transfer policy will provide for the fulfillment of all general education, lower division core requirements only. It is not intended to meet specific course requirements of unique or professional programs (e.g., engineering, pharmacy, business, etc.). Students who plan to transfer to unique or professional programs should consult with their advisors and make early contact with a program representative from the institution to which they intend to transfer.

Transfer students who have not completed the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science or the general education core courses will not come under the provision of this articulation policy.
(http://www.idahoboardofed.org/policies/section_3.asp#V.%20Articulation%20and%20Associate%20Degree%20Policy)

Idaho SBOE Core Requirements (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
3	2	3	7	6	6	36

Note: Each credit requirement listed is a minimum. A total of 36 credits must be completed in core courses. SBOE is the State Board of Education.

Illinois

The Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) was planned in three phases. The primary purpose of Phase I was to develop a General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) that would be acceptable in transfer at all

Illinois institutions in lieu of each college or university's own campus-wide general education curriculum of comparable size.

The GECC is a limited array of lower division general education courses that serves as a statewide *generic substitute* for a participating institution's general education curriculum. The IAI is particularly beneficial for those students who are uncertain about what their major will be or to which baccalaureate institution they will transfer.

- The IAI statement of purpose indicates that the GECC does not replace the college or university's own general education curriculum. "It is assumed that, while each degree-granting institution has developed its own general education program as part of its undergraduate degree requirements, most general education program objectives are similar from one institution to another."
- The IAI assumes that participating institutions will offer at least some of the courses in each of the categories identified by the panels.
- The GECC is meant to transfer as a package. Individual courses may transfer at the discretion of the receiving institution.

(http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/Board/Agendas/2002/August/Item%209.pdf)

Illinois General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
6	3	3-6	7-8	9	9	37-41

Illinois General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) (Quarter)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
8-9	4-5	5-10	10-12	12-15	12-15	56-61

Montana

The Montana *Transferable Core Curriculum* represents an agreement entered by the fifteen participating colleges and universities. It assures the transfer of up to 30 semester credits for those students enrolled in courses prescribed within each of the eight discipline areas at a participating host institution. **Satisfactory completion of courses listed in the *Transferable Core Curriculum* will permit the student to receive credit equivalent to the lower-division degree requirements of the receiving college or university.**

Initially, the *Transferable Core Curriculum* was intended to represent a singular block of 30 semester credit courses which would transfer from one participating institution to another. The reader ... will note, however, that some institutions lack approved courses in one or more of the represented disciplines; in addition, it is conceivable

that a student may, in the course of his/her educational experiences and progress, enroll in courses and earn credit at more than one institution. Consequently, in its initial stages of implementation (*i.e.*, 1992-94), course credit may be drawn from a number of participating institutions for transfer to a single receiving institution.

In addition to the *Transferable Core Curriculum*, students are encouraged to take additional courses prior to transferring to the receiving institution. Each receiving institution's policies concerning admission standards, academic progress, and the transfer of courses beyond the transfer core curriculum, frequently differ from institution to institution. Accordingly, students who contemplate transferring individual courses, or an entire block of 30 semester credits representing the *Transferable Core Curriculum*, and/or a substantial number of other courses, are advised to first consult with the intended receiving institution to determine the applicability of those courses to the general education core requirements, as well as to their intended area of major study.

The student is advised that not all *Transferable Core Curriculum* courses may transfer if the receiving institution determines that specific courses are remedial or non-college level in nature. Consequently, all transfer students are well-advised to consult the catalogs of those institutions to which they intend to transfer. (http://mus.montana.edu/transfer/policies.html)

Montana Transferable Core Curriculum (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Other	Total
3	3	6	6	9	3	30

Note: The course in the "other" category is designated as "cultural diversity."

New Mexico

The New Mexico Commission on Higher Education provides a list of 35-credit-hours of general education courses that is the safest choice for students who have not yet selected a major field of study for their degree. **The common core is the base around which most degree programs are built, and the courses in the core are guaranteed to transfer between all New Mexico campuses and to apply toward the graduation requirements for most degree programs.** The common core is published in most institutions' catalogs and can also be obtained from campus advisors or from the Commission on Higher Education and its web site. (http://www.nmche.org/reports/studtransfer01final.pdf)

New Mexico Common Core of Lower-Division General Education (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
6-7	3	3	8	6-9	6-9	35

New York

Trustees of the State University of New York (SUNY) system on December 15, 1998, passed a resolution requiring a core curriculum—including courses in American history and Western civilization—for all undergraduates. **The new policy made SUNY one of the largest public universities in America that has a mandatory core.**

The core requires students at the 17 four-year colleges in the system, beginning with the freshman class entering in fall 2000, to pass ten courses, including at least one each in American history, Western civilization, and mathematics. The other subject areas are communication and reasoning, foreign languages, humanities and the arts, information management, natural sciences, social sciences, and non-Western civilization.

The resolution outlined the implementation of the curriculum. After specifying the subject-area requirements, it charges: "The faculty of each institution will retain the responsibility for establishing the specific course requirements and content of a General Education curriculum reflective of the best practices in American higher education."

It goes on to say, "Individual campuses are encouraged to allow faculty to develop more than one curriculum which meets the General Education Requirement." (http://www.academia.org/campus_reports/1999/january_1999_3.html)

The State University of New York's general education requirement applies to all state-operated institutions offering undergraduate degrees. It requires bachelor's degree candidates, as a condition of graduation, to complete a general education program of no fewer than 30 credit hours specifically designed to achieve the student learning outcomes in ten knowledge and skill areas and two competencies. (http://www.esc.edu/ESConline/Across_ESC/academics.nsf/allbysubject/)

"Within CUNY and SUNY there are separate core curriculum requirements for the associate degree. Articulation agreements must be individually negotiated between the campuses ... [and] within both systems, policies on the transfer of credits require that community college students who complete the transfer core curriculum will have their units accepted for degree credit at either a SUNY or CUNY campus, depending on where the community college is located." (Wellman, 2002, p. 29)

State University of New York General Education Requirement (Semester) Distribution Requirements

Writing	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Lang	Total
3	3	3	6	12	3	30

Note: The credits in Soc Sci include a course in Other World Civilizations. The credits in Hum/Arts include courses in American History, Western Civilization, Humanities and The Arts. Competencies in two areas should be infused throughout the curriculum: (1) Critical Thinking (Reasoning) and (2) Information Management.

North Carolina

The associate in arts and associate in science degree programs in the NC Community College System require a total of 64-65 semester hours credit for graduation. Within the overall total, the community college system and the university have developed a general education core transfer component. This curriculum reflects the distribution of discipline areas commonly included in institution-wide, lower division general education requirements for the baccalaureate degree. The general education transfer core includes study in the areas of humanities and fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, and English composition. Within the core, community colleges must include opportunities for the achievement of competence in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and the basic use of computers. Students must meet the receiving university's foreign language and/or health and physical education requirements, if applicable, prior to or after transfer to the senior institution.

Upon admission to another public two-year institution or to a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina, students who have completed the general education core with the proper distribution of hours, but who have not completed the associate degree, will be considered to have fulfilled the institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements of the receiving institution. To be eligible for inclusion in this policy, a student must have an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale at the time of transfer and a grade of "C" or better in all core courses. Upon transfer at the sophomore level, a non-graduate who has completed the general education core should be advised at the University to take pre-major or cognate courses based on his or her chosen major.

The transcripts of students who transfer before completing the general education core will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis by the receiving universities. The transferring student who has not completed the core must meet the receiving institution's general education requirement.
(http://www.ga.unc.edu/student_info/caa/caa.pdf)

North Carolina General Education Transfer Core (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Total
6	6	8	12	12	44

Texas

Core curriculum is required of all graduates with the Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees. In 1997, the 75th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 148, which required the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules that include a statement of "the content, component areas, and objectives of the core curriculum." The Coordinating Board, in 1998, defined and recommended Assumptions, Defining Characteristics of Basic Intellectual Competencies, Perspectives, and Exemplary Educational Objectives that inform a Core Curriculum. **Every public institution of higher education is required by law to adopt and implement by Fall 1999 a core curriculum of no less than 42 semester hours that will be fully transferable and, if completed, will substitute for a receiving institution's core curriculum.** (http://www.hccs.edu/catalog99/core.htm)

"In 1987, the state legislature and the Coordinating Board, hoping to strengthen articulation and transfer, mandated the development of a statewide core curriculum. Legislation in 1997 expanded that concept, and Texas now has a transfer general education core curriculum that allows individual institutions some flexibility in designating core courses. The Coordinating Board reviews and approves each institution's core curriculum every five years. If a student completes an approved core curriculum, the receiving institution must accept those courses as a substitute for its own core requirements. Receiving institutions and specific majors may require some additional courses beyond the minimum core.

Under statutory directive, the Coordinating Board has also developed "field of study" curricula to facilitate transfer of courses within high-demand disciplines; such agreements are now in place for 38 disciplines and majors. Many institutions—including every public college and university as well as many private colleges—have also adopted the common course numbering system for lower-division courses. Institutions that choose not to use the common course numbers are required to publish a "cross-walk" between the common numbering system and their own." (Wellman, 2002, p. 35)

Texas Core Curriculum (Semester)
Distribution Requirements

Writing/Comm	Math	Sci	Soc Sci	Hum/Arts	Other	Total
6	3	6	15	6	6	42

Note: The credits in the "other" category may be drawn, at the discretion of the institution, from the previous categories or other (up to three credits) institutionally-designated options.

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